



# Fellow

Scotiabank Unlock Your Future Program

January 2024 – April 2024

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# Executive Summary

As a participant in Scotiabank's Unlock Your Future program, I engaged in a four-month series of mentor meetings, skill-building workshops, and networking events designed to bridge academic engineering studies with careers in finance and technology. Through interactive sessions on communication styles, AI fundamentals, and professional networking, I developed greater confidence, expanded my professional network by over 30 industry connections, and gained clarity on my career path in financial services.

## Program Overview

Unlock Your Future is a mentorship initiative aimed at female-identifying engineering students, offering structured guidance on career exploration within Scotiabank and the broader banking sector. The cohort of 25 students met monthly with Scotiabank mentors, ranging from campus recruiters to senior engineers, and participated in hands-on workshops and informal coffee chats.

## Personal Objectives

- **Gain Industry Insight:** Understand day-to-day roles in banking technology and digital transformation.
- **Improve Soft Skills:** Enhance communication, networking, and interview techniques.
- **Build Connections:** Establish meaningful relationships with mentors and peers.
- **Apply Learnings:** Translate workshop content into actionable career strategies.

# Key Activities

## Mentor Meetings

- **Meeting 1 (Jan 22):** Introduced to Scotiabank's structure and mentor network; set personal goals.
- **Meeting 2 (Feb 15):** Deep dive into communication styles (Dove, Owl, Peacock, Eagle) with interactive exercises.
- **Meeting 3 (Mar 10):** Explored large language models in banking, discussed AI/ML applications.
- **Meeting 4 (Apr 5):** Participated in coffee chat simulations and real conversations with employees.

## Workshops

- **Communication Styles Workshop:** Completed a timed role-play exercise, receiving feedback on adapting my style.
- **AI & Banking Tech Session:** Engaged in a live demo of LLM integration for customer service chatbots.
- **Coffee Chat Practice:** Conducted mock coffee chats, practiced elevator pitches, and refined follow-up questions.

## Learning Outcomes

- **Enhanced Confidence:** Found an increase in self-assessed networking and interview skills.
- **Technical Awareness:** Acquired foundational knowledge of AI use cases in finance.
- **Professional Network:** Secured 10+ LinkedIn connections and scheduled follow-up informational interviews.
- **Career Clarity:** Identified three potential internship roles within Scotiabank that aligned with my interests.

## Challenges Faced & Overcome

- **Virtual Engagement Fatigue:** Initially struggled to stay focused during longer Zoom sessions, but I overcame this by taking structured notes and leading breakout room discussions.
- **Scheduling Conflicts:** Balanced program commitments with academic workload by planning study blocks around meeting times.

## Personal Reflections

Participating in Unlock Your Future was transformative. I gained a nuanced view of how engineering skills apply in financial services, built lasting mentor relationships, and left the program with a concrete internship strategy. The blend of technical and soft-skill workshops has empowered me to approach future career opportunities with confidence and clarity.